Operational performance of "Kamini"

2482. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the present operational performance of thorium based nuclear research reactor "Kamini"; and

(b) the details of future plan regarding nuclear power production based on the performance of "Kamini"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) KAMINI, a thorium based nuclear research reactor at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, reached its full power of 30 KW in September 1997 and has been functioning satisfactorily.

(b) The nuclear power programme of the Department of Atomic Energy consists of three stages. The first stage of setting up of Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) has already been attained. The second stage is the setting up of plutonium fuel based Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs) , which is being developed. The third stage would be to set up reactors operating on a thorium-uranium-233 fuel cycle. The successful commissioning of KAMINI symbolises a small but significant step in the context of utilization of thorium in the third stage of the nuclear power programme. However, this can be taken up on a larger scale only after building up an adequate stock of uranium 233, which is obtained from the thorium used in the Fast Breeder Reactors.

Electricity generation by Nuclear Power Corporation

2483. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nuclear Power Corporation propose to achieve its targets of electricity generation during 1998-99;

(b) if so, the total target fixed by NPC and whether the NPC achieved the target of electricity generation during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the shortage of power in the country exists even achieving the target of electricity generation by NPC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) a target of 9795 Million Units for the generation of nuclear power has been fixed as per Annual Action Plan drawn up for the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. for the financial year 1998-99. NPCIL had achieved its targets during the last three years as given below:—

(Figures in million Units)

1995-96		1996-97		1997-98	
Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
7950	7983	7570	9068	8515	9618

(d) Yes, Sir. However, the contribution of the Nuclear Power Corporation to the total generation of electricity in the country is only about 2%.

Hazards from Uranium Mines in Bihar

2484. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention

has been drawn to an article captioned 'Inside Radiation Zone' which appeared in Delhi edition of Indian Express, dated 21st June, 1998 regarding hazards suffered by the miners of Uranium mines and people of Jaduguda area in Bihar;

(b) the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to ameliorate the lot of these hapless uranium miners and their families from hazards of radiation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The article is not based on facts. The Uranium Corporation of india Ltd. (UCIL), a Public Sector Undertaking of the Department of Atomic Energy, operates the uranium ore mines and mill in the Jaduguda area of Bihar. No miners engaged by UCIL or their families are suffering from any radiation hazards due to the mining operations of the Company. Since the inception of this Company, the radiation exposure to the miners and the radiation level in and around the plants have been constantly monitored by the Health Physics Unit of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, a constituent unit of this Department. The radiation exposure to miners are well below the prescribed permissible limit and the background radiatioin level at Jaduguda is also similar to that in the surrounding areas.

Long-term effects of Nuclear Explosions

2485. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL:
SHRI JANESHWAR MISRA:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the immediate and long-term effects of nuclear explosions on human beings;

(b) whether Government have studied the dangers of nuclear weapons, particularly the effects of bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and

(c) if so, what are the findings thereof and what steps have been taken to counter the ill-effects of nuclear explosions on human health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Nuclear explosions carried out in atmosphere can effect the human beings due to the generation of blast, heat and radiation. Underground nuclear explosions carefully done (fully contained) have no effect on human beings.

(b) and (c) The Department of Atomic Energy has studied the dangers of nuclear weapons. The studies corresponding to Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been done by various international organisations and teams. Their findings are well documented and Govt. is aware of these findings.

Demand of compensation by Residents of Pokharan Tehsil

2486. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the villagers of Khetolai, Dholia and Bhadaria of Pokharan Tehsil have demanded compensation for the damages to their homes;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to meet the demand; and

(c) whether any medical examination was carried out on those villagers and any medical and arranged to save them from radioactivity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) The villagers of Khetolai and Dholia have demanded compensation for the damages to their homes.